GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:232
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2001
RESERVATION OF WOMEN IN PANCHAYATS
A. VENKATESH NAIK

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) Whether some States are working against the 33% reservation for women in Panchayats by moving No-confidence Motion against women Chairpersons and replacing them with men;

(b) if so, whether a number of State Governments are misusing their powers by dissolving or superseding the Panchayats;

(c) whether the Government have issued any new guidelines to the State Governments in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that women are not deprived of their rights?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M VENKAIAH NAIDU)

(a)to(e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to lok sabha starred question no.232 Due for answer on 07/08/2001

(a) : No such reports have been received in this regard.. The concerned State authorities are immediately advised to take corrective steps as and when reports regarding removal of women Chairpersons in Panchayats are brought to the notice of the Central Government.

(b) to (e) : Reports on dislodging of women Chairpersons (and their replacement with men) in Uttar Pradesh were published in some newspapers. To check the misuse of the provision of `No Confidence Motion` against Chairpersons of Panchayats and to afford stability to the elected Members, the Government of Uttar Pradesh amended the State Panchayati Raj Act to the effect that a Meeting for the removal of a Chairperson of a Gram Panchayat should not be convened within a period of two years of his/her election, that a Meeting specially for this purpose should be convened by giving at least 15 days` notice in advance and that the `No Confidence Motion` should be passed by a majority of 2/3rd of all the members.

It was reported in the `Tribune` of 13th June, 2001 that the Right to Recall Act, now force in Madhya Pradesh, was invoked against one Woman Chairperson of Gram Panchayat. However, the motion against her was defeated.

While the Government of India have not issued Guidelines in respect of misuse of powers in dissolving or superseding the Panchayats, the issue of State control over Panchayats was discussed at length in the Conference of Panchayati Raj Ministers of States held on 11th July, 2001 at New Delhi. It was resolved that the scope of State Governments` intervention and control over Panchayati Raj Institutions should be minimised and if a specific complaint against any Panchayat arises, the same should be referred to a body similar to the `Ombudsman` in Kerala.